

## CHAPTER 2

### Larry goes to Washington

Larry waited in his flat for Ed to come round. There was a lot of work to do before the big meeting. Suddenly his phone buzzed.

'Big man? It's me, Jed!'



Larry nearly dropped the phone in surprise.

'Jed! What ...? How ...?'

'It's a long story. Listen, we've got some BIG problems here ...' Larry could hear lots of angry voices and the sound of fighting.

'What are you talking about?'

'Kahmunrah.'

'Who?'



'Kahmunrah. He's Ahkmenrah's big brother and, believe me, he's not very friendly! I don't know if we ...' Then the little voice was gone.

Larry had to think quickly. He ran to the door. Ed was there with a big box of papers. 'Sorry, Ed,' shouted Larry as he ran past. 'I have to go!'

Ed's mouth fell open. 'What about the meeting?' he said. 'I'll be there. But first I have to go to Washington!'

\* \* \*

The airport was busy and Larry didn't arrive in Washington until the next day. It was already late afternoon when he got to the Smithsonian.

The many buildings of the Smithsonian stood in a large park. Larry didn't know where to go. He ran into the first building. It was the National Air and Space Museum. He looked round. Where were his friends? How could he find them?





The museum was full of fantastic old planes and famous airmen and women. But Larry was in a hurry and he didn't have time to look round. He saw a woman with a group of visitors.

'Excuse me,' he said. 'I hear that they keep some old exhibits in boxes here. Where can I see them?'

The woman smiled. 'I'm sorry. They don't allow visitors to see them. But there are some ...'

Larry didn't wait. He ran past a shop and out of the building. Then he ran into the next building called the Castle. It was very big and had lots of rooms with pictures and statues of famous people. Larry ran past a big black and white photo of Al Capone with his gun. Then he stopped. He was in front of a strange wall with some Egyptian writing on it. He read the words next to the door, 'The Door to the Underworld\*.'

Larry lifted his hand to open the door.

'Don't touch!' said a loud voice. Larry turned. It was a young night guard and Larry knew the look in his eyes. He was looking for trouble.

'Let's have some fun!' said the guard. He took out his big torch. 'Touch anything and you're in trouble!'

Larry saw the guard's photo on his blue shirt. 'OK,' he thought. 'You want some fun ...' He smiled at the guard and touched the door. The guard jumped towards him. But Larry was too fast. He pulled the guard's arm behind his back and the young man dropped the light.

Larry put his mouth close to the young man's ear. 'You think you've seen it all, don't you?' he said softly. 'But, believe me, you haven't seen anything!' He picked up the guard's torch. 'Now you stay here. Do you understand?'

\* People say bad people go to the 'underworld' when they die.



The young guard's face was white. Larry turned slowly away and walked into another room. Near him there was a door with the sign, 'Museum workers only'. Larry laughed and opened his hand. He had the guard's photo! The photo allowed him to go through the door. Now perhaps he could find his friends.

Larry found a night guard's work clothes and put them on. Now he was a night guard again! He looked at his watch. Twenty-eight minutes before the sun went down. Larry saw some more stairs. Quickly he went down into the darkness under the museum.



Larry found himself in a very large, dark room. He turned on his torch. There were boxes everywhere! He opened one and jumped back quickly. The arms of a very big squid fell out! As well as boxes, there were old cars and famous people. He saw General Custer on his horse and a tall woman called Amelia Earhart. Larry stopped to



read about her. She was the first woman to fly across the Atlantic and she was beautiful. But time was passing and Larry hurried on.

He came to some Egyptian guards. 'Wait a minute,' he said to himself. The guards were holding spears and they were pointing them at a very big box. Next to them there was a tall, thin pharaoh. He looked angry. On the wall there was a broken telephone.

'They must be here!' cried Larry. Carefully he opened the box. All the exhibits from the Museum of Natural History were inside the box. The Tablet of Ahkmenrah was there, too. Larry quickly took the tablet, but the sun was already setting. He was too late!